



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
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## ***CENTAURIUM EXALTATUM*** **WESTERN CENTAURY**

Western Centaury is an annual with usually unbranched stems that are 5-25 cm high. The basal leaves are lance shaped to narrowly elliptic and 5-25 mm long, while those of the stem are longer and narrower. The leaves are sessile and opposite each other on the stem. Foliage is glabrous. One to a few erect flowers are borne on 1-4 cm long stalks 1-4 at the top of the stems. The white to light pink flowers have a slender, lobed calyx, 6-9 mm long tightly enclosing a tubular corolla that flares at the top into 5 spreading petals ca. 4 mm long. The 5 stamens are exserted from the corolla tube. The fruit is a slender capsule nearly twice the length of the calyx at maturity. Flowering in August.

Members of the Gentian Family have opposite leaves, glabrous foliage, and tubular corollas with 4-5 equal lobes. *C. EXALTATUM* can be distinguished from other members of the family by its long, narrow corolla tube and by its lack of membranous tissue between the calyx lobes. A hand lens may be necessary for positive identification.